



# Funders Together

## TO END HOMELESSNESS



### Policy Alert

*Because of the evolving nature of public policy, Funders Together to End Homelessness will now provide bi-weekly updates to keep you abreast of current policy developments. These updates will also provide details on actions for philanthropy and how we can influence long-term change.*

#### What's Happening: Build Back Better Act Negotiations

This week, Congressional leaders are working to finalize negotiations on the \$3.5 trillion comprehensive infrastructure and economic recovery package. **Today is an important day for advocacy efforts as these negotiations could result in cuts to the \$327 million that was passed by the House Budget Committee to support affordable housing.** These funds are not only an investment in housing and homelessness services, but also an [opportunity to advance racial equity](#) by reducing homelessness and housing instability for people of color through Housing Choice Vouchers.

In partnership with other members of the [National Coalition for Housing Justice](#), Funders Together is urging advocates to contact their federal lawmakers to request their support and advocacy to maintain the following spending levels, as [passed by the House](#):

- **Permanent Rental Assistance:** \$90B to help nearly 1 million households with \$75B in Housing Choice Vouchers (which includes a \$25B set-aside for people at risk of experiencing homelessness, survivors of domestic violence, and victims of human trafficking) and \$15B for project based rental assistance.
- **Public Housing Preservation:** \$80B, including \$10B for the Public Housing Capital Fund, \$66.5B for priority investments in repairs and construction, \$2.75B for community development and affordable housing
- **HOME and National Housing Trust Fund (HTF):** \$37B for the HTF to build and preserve approximately 330,000 homes affordable to people with the lowest incomes.

Other housing investment include:

- **Community Development Block Grants:** \$8.5B
- **Community Restoration and Revitalization fund:** \$7.5B
- **Rural Housing:** \$4.8B for new construction, preservation, and rental assistance
- **Tribal Housing:** \$784M for the Native American Housing Block Grant, \$784M in grants, and \$334M for Indian Community Block Grants
- **Sections 811 and 202 Housing:** \$3.5B
- **Fair Housing Support:** \$1.25B
- **Down Payment Assistance:** \$10B

#### How Philanthropy Can Take Action

**If you are a public foundation or United Way and can engage in direct lobbying,** call your federal legislators to voice your support for the investments at these levels and, if you haven't already, [sign on to and share the HoUsed Sign-On Letter](#) urging Congress to enact bold, long-term solutions that will ensure housing that is universal, stable, and affordable.

**If you are a private foundation or unable to partake in direct lobbying activities,** contact your federal policymakers to educate and inform them about what you are seeing in your community and hearing from grantee partners around affordable housing and housing instability. You can also encourage your trustees to advocate for these levels of federal investments in housing and homelessness services.

Remember: Public and private foundations may educate legislators about a broad range of issues without referencing or providing views on specific legislation. Public and private foundations can also provide capacity for grantee partners to contact their Representatives and Senators on behalf of their community.

If you need assistance or talking points, please [contact us](#) or view the [HoUsed campaign toolkit](#) with talking points.

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## What's Happening: House America Initiative

This month, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) launched [House America](#), an initiative bringing together mayors, county leaders, Tribal nation leaders, and governors to [utilize investments from the American Rescue Plan](#) to address homelessness in their communities using a Housing First approach. You can learn more about House America by watching the launch event recording [here](#).

Funders Together is working with HUD to host in-depth sessions with philanthropy to learn more about the initiative, how funders can engage, and what it means for our collective work to end homelessness. We will keep you updated with information about these sessions and how to join so keep an eye on your inbox.

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## Focusing on the Long-Term Vision: Decriminalizing Homelessness

This week with our partners in the [National Coalition for Housing Justice](#), Funders Together to End Homelessness [released a statement](#) condemning the ongoing use of law enforcement in response to visible homelessness and calling on the federal government to take steps to stop this harmful approach.

We believe all people deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. Policing- or punishment-based approaches to homelessness are unfair, cruel, and only perpetuate the cycle of homelessness, especially for Black, Indigenous, and people of color. If we want to achieve housing justice, we must stop criminalizing people experiencing homelessness and instead focus on proven solutions that put people first.

**[Read the full statement](#) and our proposed steps to end the criminalization of homelessness.** We encourage you to share the statement with your networks and partners as a resource for those in communities who are experiencing efforts to criminalize homelessness. If you have any questions or would like to speak further about the statement, please [contact us](#).

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## Policy Resource Round-Up

- **Funders Together:**
  - [Policing- and punishment-based approached: A really expensive way to make homelessness worse](#)
- **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities:**
  - [House Build Back Better Legislation Advances Racial Equity](#)
  - [Housing Vouchers in Economic Recovery Bill Would Sharply Cut Homelessness, Housing Instability](#)

- [Housing Voucher Twitter Thread by Ann Oliva](#)
- **National Alliance to End Homelessness:**
  - [Legislative Update: Homelessness in Congress' Reconciliation Bill](#)
- **National Homeless Law Center**
  - [Housing Not Handcuffs 2019: Ending the Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities](#)
- **National Low Income Housing Coalition:**
  - [NLIHC Analysis of House Financial Services Infrastructure/Economic Recovery Bill](#)
  - [HoUSed Campaign](#)
  - [State and Local Rental Assistance](#)
- **U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness**
  - [Disasters During a Pandemic: Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Resources](#)
  - [Guide to American Rescue Plan Funding that Impacts People Experiencing Homelessness](#)

As always, we are here to answer your questions or provide insights on public policy developments and opportunities. Please reach out to me or [Amanda](#) at any time.

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[Funders Together to End Homelessness](#)

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